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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 28 | Min 21 | Humidity 71% Cloudy & Wind Gusts Sensex 81,596 | Nifty 24,813 | Gold 95,480 | Silver 98,442 | Dollar 85.60 | Euro 97.04 | GBP 115.05

TAKING STOCK

Directions issue to authorities to remove encroachments on rajakaluves — even by influential individuals

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STUNG HARD

Bengaluru now accounting for nearly 40–50% of the state's dengue cases; 240 health inspectors and 700 volunteers deployed

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Instagram account posting inappropriate videos of women commuters on the Metro shocks city. This is what women say: 'privacy violated'; 'feeling unsafe'; 'deeply upset'

VOYEUR ON THE LOOSE

'Should we just all cram ourselves into the women-only coach?'

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Namma Metro has long been hailed as one of the safest and most convenient public transport options in Bengaluru. However, news about an anonymous Instagram account, 'Metro Chicks', that has been featuring images of secretly filmed women on metro trains and uploading inappropriate, voyeuristic videos without their knowledge or consent, has sent a shiver up people's spine in the city. This incident has raised serious concerns about the safety and privacy of women passengers of public transport.

Since April 11, the account began posting these clips, distorting the way women are dressed and objectifying them under the guise of casual metro content. What's even more disturbing is that some of these videos have garnered millions of views, while being circulated through Telegram channels linked to the page.

Despite being active for over a month, the account managed to go under the radar until May 20, by which time it had already

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

"It's difficult to predict individual behaviour, and such acts are a misuse of technology. We can't even ask commuters not to use phones. However, we will try our best to protect the privacy of passengers

— BMRCL spokesperson

Fall from grace

BBMP's forest dept receives 1,257 complaints pertaining to weak trees and branches between May 1–21

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Bengaluru's pre-monsoon rain has kept Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's canopy management teams on their toes.

BBMP's Forest Department says it has received 1,257 complaints of tree and branch management between May 1 and 21. Out of these, little over 400 complaints were for the removal of dry and diseased trees, and around 841 cases were regarding weak and dangling branches.

As many as 298 of these complaints were from Bengaluru South zone, 189 each from Bengaluru West and East, and 184 complaints from Bommanahalli zones. More than a 100 complaints poured in from Yelahanka.

In the given period, BBMP's control room has received 300 complaints of fallen trees and a little over 1,000 complaints of fallen branches from across the city due to gusty wind and rain.

"We have deployed 30 canopy management teams with 8 members in each team. Apart from this, we have 11 rapid response teams to attend to emergencies. We have also hired a couple of earth movers this time to clear the debris faster. The department is well equipped for the upcoming monsoon season," said BLG Swamy, deputy conservator of forest, BBMP.

To avoid tree-fall accidents this year, the Department, a couple of months ago,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Musical journey

Taaruk Raina will be performing in his debut tour 'Lost and Found', taking the audience on a captivating journey through his music. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity, Whitefield; When: June 14, 6 pm**

02 Lyrical realm

The Indian Music Experience Museum is organising a unique masterclass titled 'Rhythm and Poetry', led by Gubbi—a multilingual rapper and one of Bengaluru's pioneering voices in hip-hop. **Where: Indian Music Experience Museum, JP Nagar; When: May 25, 11 am**

03 Mic drop

After the success of 'Bas Kar Bassi', Anubhav Bassi is coming back to perform live, bringing a whole new set of funny stories and jokes to entertain the audience. **Where: Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; When: May 30, 7.30 pm**

04 Groove on

Renowned guitarist Amyt Datta will be performing with his band Amyt Datta Electric Power Quartet, as part of their tour. **Where: Fandom at Gilly's Redefined, Koramangala; When: May 22, 8 pm**

05 Play time

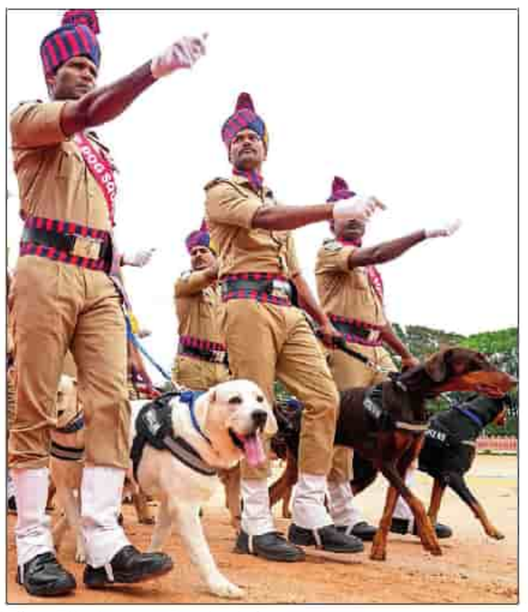
Theatrenama is presenting 'Suno toh sahi', a delightful theatrical experience that reimagines Anton Chekhov's stories with a Hindustani flair. The play follows musical banter between a couple, unfolding stories filled with humour, emotion, and fun. **Where: Vyoma ArtSpace and Studio Theatre, JP Nagar; When: May 24, 4 pm and 7 pm**

'Constitution made to ensure justice not a promise on paper'

On Wednesday, Justice K Somasekhar concluded his tenure at the Karnataka High Court following his appointment as Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court, as notified by the central government on May 20. During his farewell address, he highlighted that the Constitution serves as both a social contract and a moral guide, beyond its legal framework. "The guiding philosophy behind its making was to ensure that justice–social, economic, political, is not a promise on the paper but a reality in the lives of people," he said.

He noted that the preamble's principles of equality, fraternity, individual dignity, and national unity should guide judicial conduct, both in and out of court. The judge emphasised that a Constitutional system must protect vulnerable individuals, utilise law as protection, and maintain institutional supremacy over individual interests. "It is in the spirit of these words carved with conviction and consecrated by sacrifice that I dedicate myself to the service of the judiciary and the cause of justice," he concluded. **— BMB**

PIC: KAUSHIK JN



The Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG & IGP) of Karnataka's investiture ceremony along with the farewell parade of former DG & IGP Dr Alok Mohan, was conducted in KSRP grounds on Wednesday

MA Saleem takes charge as new DG & IGP

Senior IPS officer Dr MA Saleem has officially assumed charge as the new Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG & IGP) of Karnataka, succeeding Dr Alok Mohan who retired on Wednesday. A brief ceremony was held at the police headquarters on Nrupatunga Road in Bengaluru.

The government issued an official order confirming Saleem's appointment, placing him in concurrent charge of the post with effect from the afternoon of May 21, 2025. Until now, he served as the Director General of Police, Criminal Investigation Department, Special Units & Economic Offences.

His elevation came amidst discussions over seniority, as Prashant Kumar Thakur, who has over two years of service left, was also considered, in line with the Supreme Court's guidelines. Despite having less than two years until retirement, Saleem was chosen to lead the state's police force. **— BMB**

NCERT issues guidelines to encourage experiential learning

Initiative is expected to help students build stronger connection with real-world scenarios, ultimately preparing them to make informed career choices, says official

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In a significant move to promote experiential and skill-based learning, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has introduced guidelines to observe ten 'Bag-Free Days' in schools across India. The initiative aims to break away from textbook learning for students of Classes 6 to 8 and instead immerse them in practical and co-curricular activities.

The Department of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT), Government of Karnataka, has instructed school principals to conduct one 'Bag-Free Day' every month, making it ten such Saturdays over the academic year. During these days, students will not carry school bags and will participate in various activities that provide hands-on learning experiences in nature, technology, industry, and vocational skills.

An official said that the primary aim of the 'Bag-Free Day' initiative is to reduce the disconnect between theoretical learning and its practical application, thus helping students acquire essential life and career-oriented skills. "To support this goal, the NCERT, in collaboration with the Central Institute of Vocational Education (PSS Central Institute), has developed a comprehensive 108-page handbook that outlines a range of structured activities," the official noted. The official said that these activities are designed to promote multi-skill development, encourage teamwork and collaboration, enhance creative thinking and problem-solving abilities, and cultivate soft skills and aesthetic awareness among students.

During 'Bag-Free' days, students will not carry school bags and will participate in various activities that provide hands-on learning experiences in different areas

The learning framework has been divided into three key categories to ensure a holistic approach. Under the 'Science, Environment, and Technology' segment, students will participate in activities such as visiting bird sanctuaries and solar parks, conducting soil testing, joining 'Go Green' cycle rallies, identifying trees and birds around the school, spending time in natural settings, and exploring biogas plants, artificial intelligence, cyber security centers, and waste management facilities. They will also carry out surveys related to pet care and animal welfare.

The Department of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT), Government of Karnataka, has instructed school principals to conduct one 'Bag-Free Day' every month

In the 'Community and Institutional Exposure' category, students will be taken on field visits to various public institutions including hospitals, government offices, NGOs, banks, railway stations, factories, and vegetable markets. These visits are aimed at giving students firsthand experience of how different sectors operate and interact within the community. For 'Art, Culture, and Creative Expression', the programme encourages students to take part in puppet shows, toy and kite making, organising book fairs, and learning performing arts such as dance, drama, and mime. Additionally, they will visit historical monuments and engage in creative exercises like making art from waste materials.

An official said that the NCERT handbook highlights several key activities that will be integrated into the 'Bag-Free Days', including educational tours, field visits, hands-on experiments, environmental studies, community surveys, interviews with parents and locals, as well as group projects and case studies. "Beyond making learning more interactive and enjoyable, the initiative is expected to help students build a stronger connection with real-world scenarios, ultimately preparing them to make thoughtful and informed career choices in the future," the official added.

Minister's colleges under ED lens

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted raids on educational institutions associated with Karnataka Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara on Wednesday. The operations targeted Sri Siddhartha Medical College in Heggare and Sri Siddhartha Institute of Technology in Saraswathipuram, both located in Tumakuru. Additionally, a college near T Begur, close to Nelamangala town, was also raided.

The raids commenced around 9:00 am, with multiple teams involved in inspecting the premises and verifying documents. These institutions are reportedly affiliated with the Sri Siddhartha Academy of Higher Education, where Dr Parameshwara serves as the chancellor.

This action follows previous investigations by the Income Tax Department, which had conducted raids on the same institutions in 2019, uncovering alleged irregularities.

As of now, the ED has not released an official statement regarding the current raids.

Further details are awaited as the investigation progresses.

Congress reaction

The Congress condemned the ED searches at the educational institutions, alleging that the probe agency's actions were being undertaken at the behest of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and reflect the politics of vendetta.

Congress general secretary in-charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, said the BJP is clearly nervous and worried by the achievements of the Karnataka government over the past two years.

"We will not be silenced. We will continue to hold the PM to account for his multiple failures on multiple fronts," Ramesh said.

Congress General Secretary in-charge of Karnataka, Randeep Singh Surjewala, claimed the ED raids on the educational institutions of the Karnataka minister, one of the tallest SC Leaders, is a "frustrated reaction of the BJP and the Modi government to giving of ownership rights to 1 lakh SC-ST families yesterday at Hospet."

FIR filed against Amit Malviya, Arnab Goswami

The High Grounds police on Tuesday registered an FIR against BJP IT cell head Amit Malviya and Republic TV anchor Arnab Goswami for allegedly spreading false information claiming the Indian National Congress has an office in Türkiye.

The case was filed based on a complaint by Shrikant Swaroop BN, legal cell head of the Indian Youth Congress.

The complaint accuses both Malviya and Goswami of intentionally misrepresenting the Istanbul Congress Centre as the INC's foreign office, with the aim to mislead the public, defame a national political party, and provoke unrest amid sensitive geopolitical tensions.

It further alleges a deliberate misuse of media influence, calling for action from authorities including the Press Council, NBDSA, CBI, and MIB to dismantle the alleged disinformation network. -BMB

Girl's body found in suitcase

The body of a 10-year-old girl was found stuffed in a torn blue suitcase near the old Chandapura railway bridge in Anekal taluk on Wednesday.

The suitcase was spotted by passersby lying close to the railway tracks along Hosur Main Road near Chandapura. Alarmed by the discovery, they promptly informed the authorities. Suryanagar Police, along with personnel from Baiyappanahalli Railway Police Station, rushed to the scene and initiated an inspection.

Preliminary investigations suggest the girl may have been murdered elsewhere, and her body possibly dumped from a moving train. Bengaluru Rural Superintendent of Police, CK Baba, stated, "It appears the suitcase was thrown from railway property, likely from a moving train. The case is being handed over to the Baiyappanahalli Railway Police as it falls under their jurisdiction."

The girl's body was reportedly found mutilated, raising further suspicions about the brutal nature of the crime. No identification documents or belongings were found, complicating efforts to determine her identity. The body has been sent for post-mortem. Investigations are ongoing. -BMB

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CM orders removal of drain encroachments without bias

After flood zone inspections, Chief Minister directs urgent removal of rajakaluve encroachments and outlines ₹2,000 crore plan to complete 173 km of pending drain works

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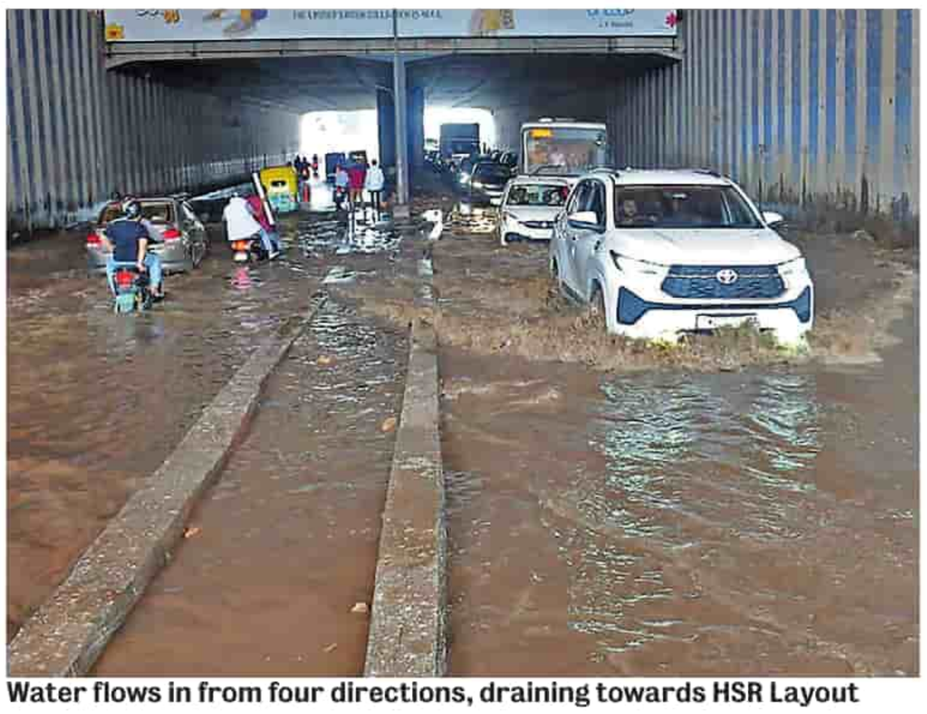

Water flows in from four directions, draining towards HSR Layout

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy CM DK Shivakumar and other officials visited several flood-hit localities across Bengaluru on Wednesday and directed officials to take swift action to clear all encroachments on stormwater drains (rajakaluves), regardless of the influence or power of those involved. Addressing the media after the inspection, the CM said, "Encroachments on rajakaluves — even by influential individuals — must be removed without hesitation. Directions have been given to the concerned authorities in this regard."

Bengaluru has about 860 km of rajakaluves. Lining work has been completed for 491 km, while 125 km of works are underway and will be completed within the next three months," Siddaramaiah said. To develop the remaining 173 km, the government has secured a ₹2,000 crore loan from the World Bank. "The tenders have been finalised, and we aim to complete the work within three years," he added. He also issued instructions to prevent basement constructions in low-lying areas in the future. "A total of 166 sensitive and highly sensitive flood-prone areas have been identified, and precautionary measures have been initiated," Siddaramaiah added.

Key area-wise updates from the CM

Manyata Tech Park: Encroachments on the stormwater drain have been identified and immediate clearance has been ordered. The park's CEO has assured that a proper drain will be constructed on a private road within 90 days to facilitate smooth water flow.

HBR Layout 5th Stage: Water entered several homes due to drain overflow. Construction of a retaining wall is underway, and the CM directed that it be completed at the earliest. Strict action has been instructed against those dumping garbage into drains.

> **"A total of 166 sensitive and highly sensitive flood-prone areas have been identified, and precautionary measures have been initiated** – CM Siddaramaiah

Sai Layout: Located in a low-lying area, the layout faces flooding due to a narrow railway vent. Siddaramaiah stated that this has been a long-standing issue, but funds have now been allocated to widen the vent and construct additional ones. Of the ₹13 crore sanctioned for the work, ₹6 crore worth of work has been completed and ₹3 crore has already been paid.

Panathur Garden (Mahadevapura): Annual flooding persists here due to narrow culverts under the railway line. Road widening and culvert expansion works are already underway, with 20% of the work pending. Using trenchless technology, all remaining work is expected to be completed within 45 days.

Silk Board Junction: Water flows in from four directions, draining towards HSR Layout. The CM emphasised coordinated planning between the Metro, BBMP, and National Highways to solve the issue. He has asked all three agencies to prepare a comprehensive plan.

Uber app becomes part of mockery amid city flooding

As heavy rains pounded Bengaluru, flooding roads, tech parks, and key IT corridors, residents faced massive traffic disruptions. Amid the chaos, a mockery of the situation began surfacing online, with visuals showing the Uber app replacing auto and bike icons with a Titanic-like ship. The altered app display claimed a "boat" would arrive shortly, reflecting the waterlogged state of the city's roads. This mockery of Bengaluru's flooding situation quickly went viral, with users sharing screenshots and reacting to the satirical take on the poor urban infrastructure. Though humorous in tone, the act struck a chord with many citizens, highlighting the frustrations over the city's repeated struggle to cope with heavy rainfall. The mockery serves as a commentary on the lack of preparedness, rather than just entertainment.

Karnataka govt fast-tracks repairs in dilapidated schools

Education minister vows repairs before term starts, blames previous delays, and announces ₹1,000 crore for rebuilding severely damaged school buildings statewide

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The State Government has assured that they will be fixed before the new academic year begins.

With many government school classrooms in poor condition, the State Government has assured that they will be fixed before the new academic year begins. School Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa said, "Alternative buildings have already been constructed to replace completely dilapidated ones. Grants for minor repairs have been released to districts, and the repair work is underway. We have directed the respective DDPI officers and BEOs to ensure all repairs are completed before schools reopen." Bangalore Mirror had recently reported as to how 45 pc of the classrooms in the State required urgent repairs.

Criticising the previous government's partial implementation of the Viveka scheme, he said, "The earlier administration announced the construction of 8,200 classrooms at a cost of ₹1,500 crore but released only ₹300 crore. As a result,

Bangalore Mirror had recently reported as to how 45 percent of the classrooms in the State required urgent repairs

due to technical and structural delays, the full number of classrooms couldn't be completed. Now, under a new initiative, we are allocating ₹1,000 crore specifically to rebuild completely dilapidated classrooms." Responding to concerns over lack of recurring funds for annual maintenance, the minister explained, "With nearly one lakh classrooms in 16,000 government schools, it is not feasible for the government to handle everything alone. Community participation has always been encouraged. We are forming school development committees in all schools by the end of June to oversee maintenance. Under the 'Namma Shaale – Namma Javabdari' (Our School – Our Responsibility) campaign, alumni, village elders, donors, and organisations are being encouraged to help restore and maintain school buildings. Thousands of classrooms have already been rejuvenated through this initiative."

CSR funds and partnerships fuelling educational infrastructure

On the involvement of private companies and use of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds, Bangarappa said, "While companies have autonomy over how they use their CSR funds, we are actively persuading them to invest in education. As a result, the Azim Premji Foundation has contributed ₹1,591 crore, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is extending ₹2,500 crore in funding. A portion of this will be used to open 2,500 Karnataka Public Schools (KPS), of which 500 will be inaugurated this year."

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Road danger

Abbigere

Pipeline Road in Srikrupa Layout, Abbigere, lies in a deplorable state after recent rains, exposing poor maintenance and civic neglect.

Misused energy

BTM Layout

Streetlights were seen glowing in broad daylight in BTM Layout 2nd Stage — sparking concerns over energy wastage and poor monitoring.

Drain disaster

JP Nagar

Clogged stormwater drains in JP Nagar 1st Phase, led to rainwater flooding homes, leaving residents struggling with severe inconvenience.

Photo links Darshan to crime

Police have submitted a supplementary charge sheet against Kannada actor Darshan and other co-accused in the high-profile murder case of fan Renukaswamy, intensifying the legal heat around the star.

Investigating officer ACP Chandan Kumar filed the 132-page additional charge sheet before the trial court in Bengaluru, which reportedly includes fresh evidence and testimonies. Among the significant developments, police sources revealed that forensic experts recovered a crucial photograph showing Darshan with the other accused on the day of the murder. The image had initially been deleted from a mobile phone but was successfully retrieved by the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL).

The emergence of the photo is a major blow to Darshan's defence, which has repeatedly asserted that the actor was not present at the crime scene. Meanwhile, the Karnataka Police have approached the Supreme Court to challenge the bail granted to Darshan. The apex court has said it will hear the matter after July 14. Darshan, his partner Pavithra, and 15 others were arrested on June 11, 2024, for allegedly kidnapping and murdering 33-year-old fan Renukaswamy from Chitradurga.

The state government's petition challenging the bail was taken up by the Supreme Court in January, leading to notices being issued to Darshan, Pavithra, and five others. The court instructed that all accused out on bail must report to it monthly. Darshan, listed as the second accused, stirred further controversy recently by skipping a court hearing, citing back pain, only to be seen at a movie premiere with actor Chikkanna, a witness in the case. This act drew criticism and was flagged as a violation of bail conditions that prohibit contact between the accused and witnesses.

On April 8, the Bengaluru Civil and Sessions Court admonished Darshan's absence and made it clear that his physical presence will be mandatory for all future hearings, warning that excuses will no longer be tolerated.

BJP MLA booked for gangrape

BJP MLA N Munirathna, who represents the Rajarajeshwari Nagar (RR Nagar) constituency, has been named in a complaint involving allegations of gangrape and other charges. The RMC Yard Police registered the case following a complaint filed by a 40-year-old woman, reportedly a party worker.

According to the FIR, the woman is currently undergoing treatment at a hospital in Bengaluru, where the police recorded her statement. She has accused Munirathna and four others—identified as Vasantha, Channakeshava, Kamal, and an unidentified individual—of subjecting her to prolonged harassment and sexual violence.

The complainant alleged that her ordeal began in 2013 when Munirathna allegedly had her jailed under false accusations of prostitution. After her release, she claimed the MLA again targeted her by implicating her in a murder case, resulting in another stint behind bars. She was granted bail within a month.

On June 11, 2023, the woman alleged that two of the accused came to her residence and convinced her to accompany them to Munirathna's office with a promise of help in getting the charges against her dropped. There, she claimed, she was gangraped by Munirathna and his associates. The FIR further states that the MLA humiliated her by urinating on her face and injecting her with an unknown substance, allegedly warning that it would have lifelong consequences.

The victim also alleged that she was threatened with dire consequences if she spoke about the incident, and was later dropped off at home by the accused. In January 2025, she began experiencing severe abdominal pain. Medical tests, including those conducted at Victoria Hospital, reportedly revealed that she had contracted an incurable viral infection. Unable to cope with the physical and emotional trauma, she allegedly attempted suicide by consuming sleeping pills on May 19. A neighbour found her in time and admitted her to a hospital, where she is currently being treated. Based on her statement and medical reports, the police have registered a case against Munirathna and the other accused under multiple sections of the Indian Penal Code, including Section 376D (gangrape), 270 (malignant act likely to spread infection), etc.

B'luru accounts for half of state's dengue cases

With rains fuelling spike, Bengaluru now reports 40% of Karnataka's dengue cases; officials ramp up inspections and urge cleanup to curb mosquito breeding

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With the city receiving widespread rainfall, Bengaluru is now accounting for nearly 40–50% of the state's dengue cases. Reacting to this, Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dinesh Gundu Rao, "Bengaluru is stepping up its fight against dengue with the deployment of 240 health inspectors and 700 volunteers. The 'Check, Clean, Cover' campaign—an initiative jointly undertaken by the Health Department and BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike)—will create awareness and implement preventive measures in public areas and waterlogged zones to stop the breeding of Aedes mosquitoes, the primary carriers of dengue."

Protect yourself from dengue

Dengue fever, transmitted by the Aedes aegypti mosquito, remains a serious and fast-spreading health threat. The disease typically manifests within 5 to 7 days of a mosquito bite, making early awareness and swift action critical. To safeguard against infection, health officials recommend wearing full-sleeved clothing, using mosquito repellents, and sleeping under mosquito nets, especially for vulnerable groups such as infants, the elderly, and pregnant women.

Experts urge the public not to dismiss fever symptoms. "Dengue can be fatal and lead to rapid complications. If you have a fever, visit the nearest health centre to check for dengue or malaria. Do not self-medicate or wait until symptoms worsen," said an expert. Medical professionals advise immediate consultation if a fever doesn't respond to paracetamol or is accompanied by symptoms like abdominal pain, vomiting, loose stools, or excessive sweating. "Don't wait until the patient starts bleeding or platelet levels drop—early detection is key," added another expert.

Aedes mosquitoes hide in dark corners indoors & lay eggs in water containers

> **Dengue can be fatal and lead to rapid complications. If you have fever, visit nearest health centre to check for dengue or malaria. Do not self-medicate** –Expert

Dengue is known to cause outbreaks, particularly during the monsoon and post-monsoon seasons. Controlling mosquito breeding is the most effective method of prevention. The Aedes mosquito becomes a carrier by biting an infected person. Once infected, the mosquito can transmit the virus to others, though there is no visible way to identify an infected mosquito.

These mosquitoes rest indoors in dark, shaded areas like closets, under furniture, and in cool outdoor spaces. The female lays eggs in stagnant water, common in and around homes, schools, and public places. The eggs develop into adult mosquitoes in just 10 days, making regular cleanup of water sources essential.

Favourite breeding grounds include barrels, jars, buckets, plant saucers, open tanks, water coolers, tyres, flower vases, disposable containers, and any discarded items that collect water. Health experts stress that all efforts to control mosquito populations must focus on eliminating these breeding sites before the transmission season begins. To break the mosquito-human transmission cycle, the public is urged to stay vigilant. Use insect screens on doors and windows, wear body-covering clothes during the day (when dengue mosquitoes are most active), and use mosquito repellents regularly. Simple precautions can go a long way in protecting yourself and your community from this potentially life-threatening disease.

Youth rams car, woman dies

A 22-year-old woman lost her life in a car accident in the early hours of Wednesday near the South Gate of the ASC Centre on Lower Agram Road.

According to Ashoknagar Traffic Police, the incident occurred around 1:45 am when the accused, Preetham Christian (24), was driving a car at high speed with Sara Catherine (22), sister of the complainant Allen Benjamin, as the passenger. Preetham allegedly lost control of the vehicle near the India Garage Junction and rammed into a light pole, a road divider, and another pole. The front portion of the car was completely damaged.

Sara sustained grievous injuries to her head, face, and other parts of her body. Passersby rushed her to the emergency department of Hostet Hospital in an autorickshaw. However, doctors declared her dead.

A case has been registered under Sections 281 and 106(1) of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS).

Reinvestigation demanded in death

Human rights and women's rights coalition 'Naveddu Nilladiddare Karnataka' has raised serious concerns over the police investigation into the death of a 14-year-old deaf and mute girl from the Hakki Pikki community in Bhadrapura, Ramanagara. The girl's body was found near railway tracks on May 12, 2025. While initial reports pointed to sexual assault and murder, police later claimed it was a railway accident based on CCTV and forensic reports.

In an open letter to the state government, the network highlighted several inconsistencies, including poor crime scene handling, delay in post-mortem findings, unclear CCTV footage, and absence of SC/ST Atrocities Act provisions in the FIR.

Bribe sting nets two BBMP officials

Two officials from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) were apprehended in a planned trap operation. The operation, supervised by SP-1 KLA Bengaluru City PS, resulted in the recovery of a part payment of a ₹10 lakh bribe.

The accused officials have been identified as Madhava Rao (40), Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) of BBMP, Hebbal Subdivision, and Shri Surendra, Assistant Engineer (AE) of BBMP, RMV Extension. The officials were allegedly demanding a bribe of ₹10,00,000 to issue a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to BESCOM, crucial for resuming a power connection.

Liquor prices set to rise at Karnataka army canteens

Excise Department proposes liquor duty hike to curb diversion from military canteens and boost Karnataka's revenue amid rising fiscal demands

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Army canteens enjoy liquor rates 30–40% below market

The Karnataka government plans to hike Additional Excise Duty on liquor sold at army canteens to boost revenue and curb misuse. Officials cite parity with neighbouring states and rising supply volumes as key reasons

Liquor at army canteens in Karnataka may soon become more expensive, with the state's Excise Department planning to increase the Additional Excise Duty (AED) on Indian Made Liquor (IML) and beer supplied to military canteens.

The move comes as part of the department's efforts to mobilize resources and meet its annual revenue targets. Officials said a formal proposal is being drafted to revise the AED rates, which currently remain nominal for liquor sold through military canteens.

In Karnataka, two army canteens operated by the Canteen Stores Department (CSD) under the Ministry of Defence supply liquor and essential goods to serving and retired defence personnel and their families at highly subsidised rates. The discounts are largely due to excise duty exemptions, which allow prices to be 30–40% lower than in regular retail liquor shops.

According to official data, in 2023–24, around 153.87 lakh litres of IML and 10.84 lakh litres of beer were sold through these canteens. These figures are expected to rise slightly in the current financial year. However, excise officials believe the current AED structure does not reflect the growing scale of sales.

At present, the AED levied on liquor supplied to military canteens ranges from 1 to 3.70 per litre for IML and up to 2 per litre for beer. In comparison, liquor sold to the general public attracts AED ranging from 297 to 3,000 per litre for IML, based on the brand and alcohol strength, while beer is taxed at nearly 200% of its production cost.

Officials argue that Karnataka lags behind other states in taxing liquor sold through military canteens. Neighbouring states such as Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Kerala, and Goa levy AEDs ranging from 20% to 70% of the rates applicable in the open market. Karnataka now plans to adopt a similar model while keeping the tax rates lower than those imposed on civilian sales.

Excise Minister RB Thimmapur has instructed the department to study tax structures in neighbouring states and prepare a comprehensive proposal. The department is also examining the potential revenue gains from such a move.

Apart from generating revenue, the proposed hike aims to address concerns about misuse. Authorities have reported instances of subsidised liquor being diverted and illegally sold to civilians, particularly from General Forces (GENF) canteens. With such high volumes being sold, the department believes a hike in AED could help plug leakages in the system.

While the proposal may lead to a hike in liquor prices at army canteens, affecting affordability for defence personnel and their families, the state government maintains that the step is necessary to ensure fairness and prevent misuse of tax exemptions.

Posts now removed, but surveillance gaps remain

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

amassed over 5,605 followers and uploaded more than 13 such videos and Telegram. These clips, often filmed covertly during peak hours, showcase unsuspecting women, focusing on their body parts in a deliberately demeaning way. The linked Telegram channel further extended the reach of these exploitative videos. Some of the videos carry text such as "finding beautiful girls on Namma Metro".

"This isn't just about digital harassment, it's a breach of safety in a space where women are supposed to feel secure," said a commuter who regularly travels in the metro, urging authorities to take immediate action. "The fact that someone could repeatedly record inside a metro coach without detection points to a larger issue of surveillance gaps."

Though the Instagram account now appears to have been taken down, the damage is done.

Posts had already been circulated online. BMRCL officials confirmed that the Telegram channel has been taken down and all Instagram posts have been removed. They added that the police have already registered a case and begun an investigation. However, they acknowledged the challenges in preventing such incidents. "It's difficult to predict individual behaviour, and such acts are a misuse of technology. We can't even ask commuters not to use phones. They should use technology for good purposes, However, we will try our best to protect the privacy of passengers," a BMRCL spokesperson said.

Many women are now expressing unease about metro travel after this incident. "I take the metro every day and always believed it was the safest way to get around. Even if we think about travelling in the women-only coach, not all women traveling that day can fit in the coach. Besides there are many who are travelling with male friends, family members, some of them might be new to Bengaluru and accompanied by someone, how will stand separately? Now, I feel like I have to constantly watch over my shoulder," said a 22-year-old student.

A Jayanagar resident and commuter shared her frustration, saying women are already cautious while commuting and focused on getting home safely. "Seeing such videos recorded without consent is deeply upsetting. Until the culprit is caught, there's a constant fear that someone might still be out there, secretly filming others," she said.

Bengaluru Central MP PC Mohan called it a blatant violation of privacy and dignity. "Not just creepy but a serious crime. Tagging blrcitypolice to take immediate action," a social media user who came across the account shared it on X and tagged police officials to take action against the "pervert".

This incident shines a harsh light on the loopholes in metro station surveillance, and minimal patrolling by security personnel inside coaches. While there are CCTV cameras in stations, the absence of visible deterrents and prompt monitoring on the trains themselves makes it easier for such miscreants to operate undetected.

DCP South Lokesh Jagalsar confirmed that the case has been registered in this regard at Banashankari Police station under relevant sections of the Information Technology Act, including provisions related to voyeurism, as the act involves unauthorised filming and sharing of videos that violate an individual's privacy and dignity. Even Bengaluru city police commissioner B Dayanada has promised that the accused will be traced and arrested.

Jan Aushadhi centres in Karnataka hit by drug shortages

Essential generic medicines vanish from shelves, leaving patients helpless and outlets on brink of closure

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Despite the presence of Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Jan Aushadhi Kendras across Karnataka, the shortage of essential medicines has rendered these centres ineffective. Generic drug shops, which were launched to provide affordable medicines, are now on the verge of closure due to poor supply and lack of interest from supplying agencies.

Jan Aushadhi centres, established to make essential medicines available at subsidised rates, are falling short of public expectations. Of the 1,412 centres across Karnataka, nearly half are reportedly facing shortages of basic, daily-use medicines. Even widely prescribed drugs for conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, heart ailments, tuberculosis, fever, asthma, gastric issues, and cancer are often missing from the shelves.

Store managers say they are forced to turn patients away with the usual response: "Please come back after a couple of days." In many cases, medicines go out of stock within a day or two of their arrival, and restocking takes over two weeks even after placing a request.

"There's a high demand for generic medicines as they cost 50% to 90% less than branded ones. But the supply has been unreliable for the past few months. We've written to the warehouses in Chennai, Bengaluru, and Mysuru, requesting timely deliveries," said the owner of a Jan Aushadhi store in Bengaluru.

Essential medicines for chronic illnesses missing from Jan Aushadhi shelves

Health Minister says essential drugs are available free at government hospital pharmacies so need for Jan Aushadhi Kendras within government hospital premises being reassessed

Responding to the growing concerns, Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dinesh Gundu Rao acknowledged the affordability of generic medicines but pointed out that essential drugs are already available free of cost at government hospital pharmacies. This has prompted the state health department to reassess the need for Jan Aushadhi Kendras within government hospital premises.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, the Department of Health and Family Welfare clarified that the restriction applies only to Jan Aushadhi outlets operating within government hospital campuses. Centres located elsewhere across the city and state remain fully accessible to the public.

"The government spends thousands of crores every year to procure and distribute free medicines to poor and middle-class patients. Compared to Jan Aushadhi stores, our government pharmacies offer better availability of essential drugs," a senior health official said.

'Voices from margins must continue to be heard'

Banu Mushtaq creates history as first Kannada writer to win International Booker Prize

Banu Mushtaq, author of 'Heart Lamp', right, and Deepa Bhasthi hold the trophies after winning the International Booker Prize, in London, Tuesday

INFOCUS BIG WIN

Celebrated writer, lawyer, and activist Banu Mushtaq has made history by becoming the first Kannada author to win the International Booker Prize, one of the most prestigious literary honours in the world. Her anthology of short stories, 'Heart Lamp', an English translation of her original Kannada work 'Haseena Mattu Itara Kathegalu' (Haseena and Other Stories), earned her the global accolade at a grand ceremony held at London's Tate Modern on Tuesday.

The award also recognises Deepa Bhasthi, the translator of 'Heart Lamp', who has now become the first Indian translator to be conferred with the International Booker. In a statement lauding the achievement, Congress National President Mallikarjun Kharge said, "India beams with pride as Banu Mushtaq becomes the first Kannada writer to receive the International Booker Prize. Her extraordinary storytelling, rooted in values of harmony, secularism, and fraternity, not only honours Kannada literature but also elevates India's cultural standing globally."

Kharge noted that Mushtaq's women characters draw their strength from silent resilience rather than public spectacle—portraying inner courage and dignity in the face of hardship. He also extended warm wishes to Deepa Bhasthi for her impeccable translation that brought these voices to a global readership.

Former Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa also expressed joy over the milestone: "This is a proud moment for Karnataka. For the first time ever, a Kannada work has received the International Booker Prize. It is a testament to our state's literary and cultural richness." He extended special congratulations to both Mushtaq and Bhasthi for this landmark achievement.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy also conveyed their congratulations to Mushtaq, praising her courage, creativity, and contributions to Kannada literature.

The 'Heart Lamp' anthology features 13 short stories written over a span of three decades (1990–2023), focusing on the lives and struggles of Muslim women in South India. Known for her bold voice and feminist lens, Mushtaq began her writing journey during her school days and chose to marry against societal norms. Her work often challenged patriarchal and religious fundamentalism, leading to threats and fatwas, but she remained undeterred in her commitment to advocating for women's rights. While receiving the award, Mushtaq called the honour a "victory for diversity", expressing hope that voices from the margins continue to be heard and celebrated. Her book was selected from a shortlist of six international titles, cementing its place among the finest in global literature. —BMB

Amusement park plan near KRS: Notice to State, Centre

The Karnataka High Court has directed notices to the Central and State governments regarding a PIL challenging the validity of a proposed ₹2,663-crore amusement park project near the Krishnaraja Sagar (KRS) in Mandya district.

Justices BM Shyam Prasad and KV Aravind, sitting as a vacation Division Bench, issued the directive on a petition submitted by K Boraiah and four other agriculturists from Krishnaraja Sagar, Srirangapatna taluk. The court has also notified the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) and related authorities.

The petitioners have contested a tender released on May 13, 2025, seeking private sector participation for project development under a public-private partnership arrangement with a 30-year maintenance agreement.

Advocate M Shivaprakash, representing the petitioners, argued that the State government has disregarded the KRS dam's primary irrigation purpose by pursuing an amusement park project that commercially exploits fertile agricultural lands at public expense, adversely affecting farmers and agricultural activities. The petitioners noted that Cauvery Neeravari Nigama Limited, which is executing the 'development and operation/maintenance of proposed upgradation of Cauvery Brindavan Garden under KRS Dam' project, has not obtained NDSA approval.

The petition highlights the absence of public consultation for objections and suggestions regarding the amusement park project, despite its environmental and dam safety implications.

The petitioners assert that the commercial venture would attract 10,000 to 20,000 daily visitors, with vehicular movement causing permanent damage to agricultural land and the ecosystem surrounding the century-old dam.

Agricultural concerns

The petitioners criticise the government's willingness to allocate₹2,663 crore for the park whilst neglecting farmers' long-standing requests for canal upgrades and tank desilting in catchment and river basin areas.

The petitioners have highlighted that gram panchayats previously opposed the amusement park proposal when it was first introduced in 2018. —BMB

UPI updates

June 30, 2025: From this day you will no longer be making UPI payments without knowing the identification of the beneficiary.

New rule: All UPI applications should only show the name of the ultimate beneficiary to the customer when they land on the pre-transaction page, i.e., right before making the payment

From the circular "For P2P and P2PM transactions, UPI applications shall ensure that only the ultimate beneficiary's name (banking name as fetched from Validate Address API) is displayed to the user on the pre-transaction details page. Names extracted from QR codes, user-defined names of the payee, or any other logic should not be displayed to the payer in the UPI app."

What is P2P transaction?
Peer-to-peer transactions take place between 2 individuals without the need for an intermediary.

What is P2PM?
Ths category includes small merchants or vendors operating in the unorganised sector, like your local grocery store or other such merchants.

CBS: The name of the ultimate beneficiary, as registered in the CBS (Core Banking Solutions) software, will be the only name shown to the payer/customer. All Indian banks use the Core Banking System (CBS), which stores customer databases and account information and facilitates real-time transactions. Hence, the "Ultimate Beneficiary Name,' as per CBS, would refer to the name recorded in the official record and database of the payee's bank.

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- Dr. D. PREMACHANDRA SAGAR, VICE-CHAIRMAN

Clarity on contact officers helped citizens file plaints

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

published a list of officials across all eight zones in the BBMP limit that were to be contacted for the removal of 'dangerous' avenue trees in the city. The idea was to get rid of weak, ailing trees during the summer and avoid mishaps in the monsoon.

This large number of complaints, according to the officials, is also due to clarity on contact officers.

Between April 2024 and May 2025, the canopy management teams have attended to nearly 20,000 cases.

Official data shows that complaints of falling trees/branches in Bengaluru are on the rise.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, the team attended to 7,472 cases. It went up to 12,107 between April 2021 and March 2022, followed by 17,948 canopy management cases between April 2023 and March 2024.

BBMP has also increased the number of canopy management teams over the last few years. BBMP had 15 canopy management teams (each with eight members) in 2020, which was expanded to 28 teams at a total cost of Rs 11.7 crore in 2023, followed by 30 teams currently.

BBMP DCF says, more than rain and gusty wind, it is improper handling of avenue trees by other agencies and BBMP departments that has led to so many green trees crashing.

"We received more than 200 complaints from the public about weak and ailing trees and dangling branches in April, which is unusual. These were mostly green trees, but were hollow on the inside. This is mainly because of the mishandling of avenue trees.

While agencies such as BWSSB and BBMP take up pipe laying or road improvement work, they carry out such work carelessly, leading to root damage. We have sent notices to BWSSB and BBMP engineers in such cases," added Swamy.

BBMP will also soon begin freeing up the critical root zones of avenue trees in the city that have concrete up to their trunk.

Rider dies after branch falls on him in Koramangala

A 48-year-old man, Moodalgiriappa, died after a large tree branch fell on him while he was returning home on a two-wheeler near Printo Junction on 60 Feet Road, 5th Block, Koramangala, around 2.45 pm on Wednesday.

According to police officials and a complaint filed by his friend Ramesh, who was riding with him as the pillion, the incident occurred suddenly when the tree branch struck Moodalgiriappa on the head. He collapsed on the spot and was rushed to St. John's Hospital, where he later succumbed to his injuries. The pillion rider was seriously injured and is currently undergoing treatment.

Authorities suspect that recent rains or the poor condition of the tree may have caused the branch to fall. Koramangala police have registered a case and are investigating the circumstances of the incident.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I Laxmikant Kulkarni, S/o. Nandan Kulkarni, aged about 60 years, residing at Survey No.210, 1st Floor, Dhaneshwari Paradise, Jaisingh Layout, Next to Manipal Hospital, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bengaluru-560098. Laxmikant N Kulkarni and Laxmikant Kulkarni pertains to one and the same person and its me only vide affidavit dated 20/05/2025 before notary S R THULASIKRISHNA, Bengaluru

I, YASHODA MANJANATH HEGDE Resident at Flat No 306, Raycon Orchard, 4th Cross, A Block, AECS Layout, Kundalahalli, Bengaluru-560037 . have changed my name to YASHODA HEGDE vide affidavit dated 20.04.2025 Sworn before notary: D Sarala Kumari, Bangalore

I, Shashank Sharma S/o Srigopal Sharma R/o, L-1402 Purva Highland, Mallasandra, Holiday Village Road, Off Kanakapura Road, Bangalore, Karnataka - 560062, have changed the name of my son from Arin Sharma to Rudraksha Sharma henceforth for all purposes.

I, Rajendra Kumar s/o Mohanlal R/o No.41, 5th floor, Kanchan Apt, Akkipet main road, Chickpet, Bengaluru 560053 have changed my name to Rajendra Kumar Mohanlal Jain I shall be called by this name for all purpose

I, Dharmendra Kumar Narendra Kumar s/o Narendar Kumar R/o No.227, 2nd main, 5th cross, New Thippasandra, Bengaluru 560075 have changed my name to Dharmendar Kumar I shall be called by this name for all purpose

I, Nityanand s/o Rangaswamy R/o 113, 1st floor, 7th B main, 3rd block, 4th stage, Basaveshwaranagar Bengaluru 560079 have changed my name to Nityanand rangaswamy. I shall be called by this name for all purpose

I, Anitha Jagadish R/o No.11, 1st main, B-block, Vaderahalli, K Jayanna layout, Bengaluru 560098 have changed my name to Anitha Bangalore Venkateshaiah. I shall be called by this name for all purpose

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **ANITHAMMA R** alias **R ANITHAMMA** W/o MUNIRAJU, aged about 35 years, residing at VADAGERI VILLAGE, MUDUVATTI POST, VAKKALERI HOBLI, KOLAR TALUK AND DISTRICT - 563101 have changed my name to **ANITHA** vide affidavit dated 02.04.2025 sworn before Notary Public M.K.VISHALAKSHI, Kolar

Change Of Name
I, Raghavndra Residing at Kodalipura, Mayasandra Post, Attibele Hobli, Anekal taluq, Bengaluru 562107, Have changed my name to Raghavendra Narayanappa Affidavit dated 20.05.2025 before Notary Muniswamy. T.

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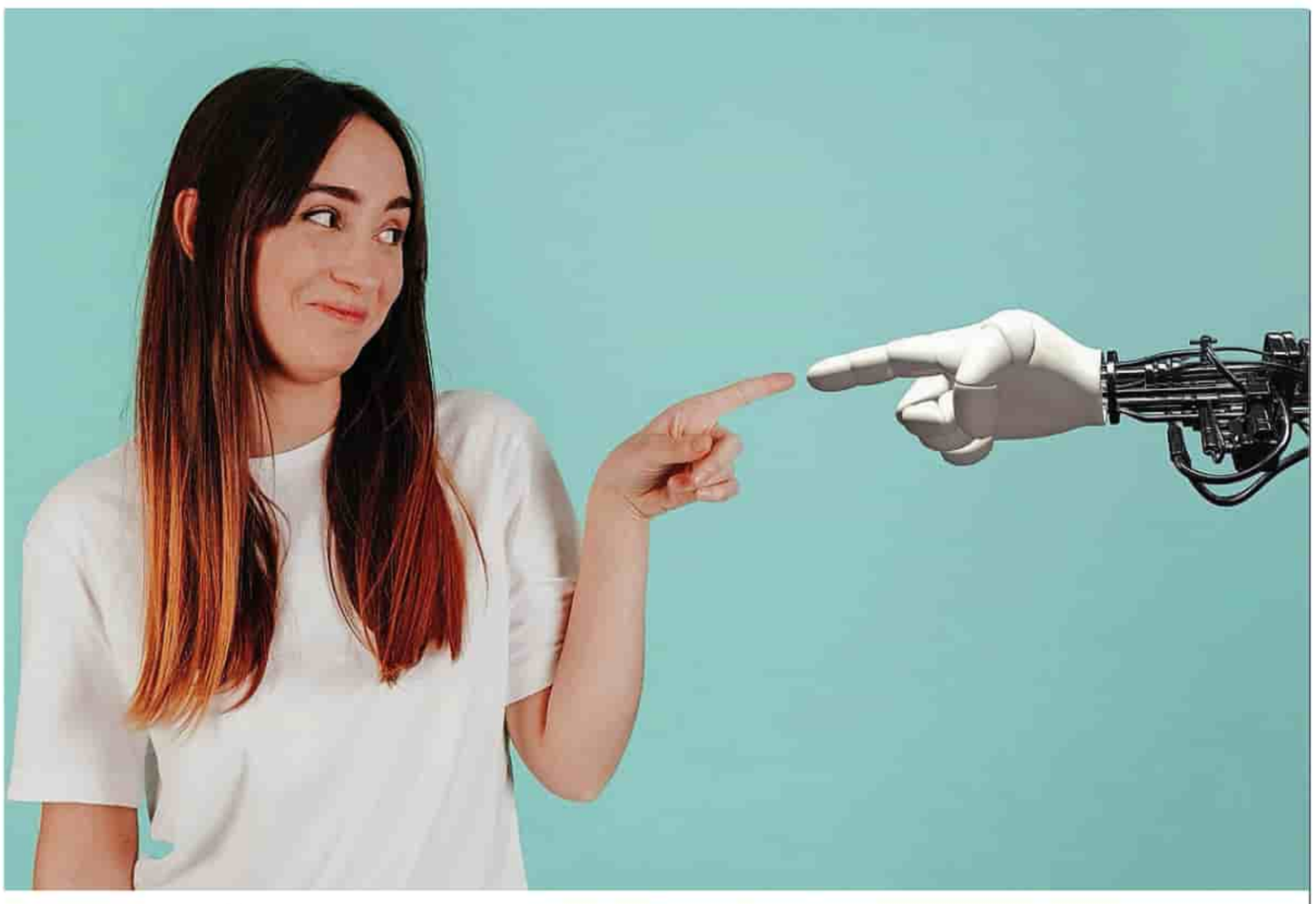


IMAGINARY BEST FRIEND

Can AI be a solution for social isolation? Not really

Mark Zuckerberg recently suggested that AI chatbots could combat social isolation by serving as "friends" for people experiencing loneliness.

He cited statistics that the average American has fewer than three friends but yearns for as many as 15. He was close: According to a 2021 report from the Survey Center on American Life, about half of Americans have fewer than four close friends.

Zuckerberg then posited that AI could help bridge this gap by providing constant, personalised interactions.

"I would guess that over time we will find the vocabulary as a society to be able to articulate why that is valuable," he added.

Loneliness and social disconnection are serious problems. But can AI really be a solution? Might relying on AI for emotional support create a false sense of connection and possibly exacerbate feelings of isolation? And while AI can simulate certain aspects of companionship, doesn't it lack the depth, empathy and mutual understanding inherent to human friendship?

Researchers have started exploring these questions. But as a moral philosopher, I think it's worth turning to a different source: the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle.

Though it might seem odd to consult someone who lived over 2,000 years ago on questions of modern technology, Aristotle offers enduring insights about friendships – and which ones are particularly valuable.

More important than spouses, kids or money

In his philosophical text Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle maintained that true friendship is essential for "eudaimonia," a Greek word that is typically translated as "flourishing" or "well-being."

For Aristotle, friends are not just nice to have – they're a central component of ethical living and essential for human happiness and fulfillment.

"Without friends, no one would choose to live," he writes, "though he had all other goods."

A solitary existence, even one of contemplation and intellectual achievement, is less complete than a life with friends. Friendship contributes to happiness by providing emotional support and solidarity. It is through friendship that individuals can cultivate their virtues, feel a sense of security and share their accomplishments.

Empirical evidence seems to support the connection between friendship and eudaimonia. A 2023 Pew Center research report found that 61% of adults in the U.S. say having close friends is essential to living a fulfilling life – a higher proportion than those who cited marriage, children or money. A British study of 6,500 adults found that those who had regular interactions with a wide circle of friends were more likely to have better mental health and be happier.

And a meta-analysis of nearly 150 studies found that a lack of close friends can increase the risk of death as much as smoking, drinking or obesity.

Different friends for different needs

But the benefit of friendship that Aristotle focuses on the most is the role that it plays in the development of virtue.

In Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle identifies three tiers of friendship.

The first tier is what he calls "friendships of utility," or a friendship that is based on mutual benefit. Each party is primarily concerned with what they can gain from the other. These might be colleagues at work or neighbors who look after each other's pets when one of them is on vacation. The problem with these friendships is that they are often fleeting and dissolve once one person stops benefiting from the relationship.

The second is "friendships of pleasure," which are friendships based on shared interests. These friendships can also be transient, depending on how long the shared interests last. Passionate love affairs, people belonging to the same book club and fishing buddies all fall into this category. This type of friendship is important, since you tend to enjoy your passions more when you can share them with another person. But this is still not the highest form of friendship.

According to Aristotle, the third and strongest form of friendship is a "virtuous friendship." This is based on mutual respect for each other's virtues and character.

Two people with this form of friendship value each other for who they truly are and share a deep commitment to the well-being and moral development of one another. These friendships are stable and enduring. In a virtuous friendship, each individual helps the other become better versions of themselves through encouragement, moral guidance and support.

As Aristotle writes: "Perfect friendship is the friendship of men who are good and alike in virtue. … Now those who wish well to their friends for their sake are most truly friends; for they do this by reason of their own nature and not incidentally; therefore their friendship lasts as long as they are good – and goodness is an enduring thing."

In other words, friendships rooted in virtue not only bring happiness and fulfillment but also facilitate personal growth and moral development. And it happens naturally within the context of the relationship.

According to Aristotle, a virtuous friend provides a mirror in which one can reflect upon their own actions, thoughts and decisions. When one friend demonstrates honesty, generosity or compassion, the other can learn from these actions and be inspired to cultivate these virtues in themselves.

No nourishment for the soul

So, what does this mean for AI friends?

By Aristotle's standards, AI chatbots – however sophisticated – cannot be true friends.

They may be able to provide information that helps you at work, or engage in lighthearted conversation about your various interests. But they fundamentally lack qualities that define a virtuous friendship.

AI is incapable of mutual concern or genuine reciprocity. While it can be programmed to simulate empathy or encouragement, it does not truly care about the individual – nor does it ask anything of its human users.

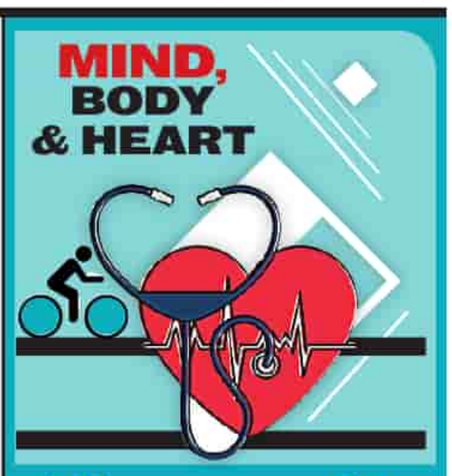
Moreover, AI cannot engage in the shared pursuit of the good life. Aristotle's notion of friendship involves a shared journey on the path to eudaimonia, during which each person helps another live wisely and well. This requires the kind of moral development that only human beings, who face real ethical challenges and make real decisions, can undergo.

I think it is best to think of AI as a tool. Just like having a good shovel or rake can improve your quality of life, having the rake and the shovel do not mean you no longer need any friends – nor do they replace the friends whose shovels and rakes you used to borrow.

While AI may offer companionship in a limited and functional sense, it cannot meet the Aristotelian criteria for virtuous friendship. It may fill a temporary social void, but it cannot nourish the soul.

If anything, the rise of AI companions should serve as a reminder of the urgent need to foster real friendships in an increasingly disconnected world.

(Gregg D. Caruso, Fairfield University, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

7 symptoms of covid

Diverse symptoms
Covid-19 in 2025 is evolving, but it hasn't disappeared. The JN.1 variant and its offshoots are leading to fresh infections with subtler, more diverse symptoms.

1. Extreme Fatigue and Muscle Weakness
Covid-19 fatigue in 2025 is being described as sudden and overwhelming, even in mild cases. Muscle weakness, especially in the legs and arms, is also more commonly reported than in previous waves.

2. Nausea and Loss of Appetite
Stomach issues have become more common in the current wave, with many patients experiencing a sustained loss of appetite, mild nausea, or queasiness.

3. Runny Nose and Nasal Congestion
While this was seen in earlier variants, a runny nose is now often the first symptom in 2025 cases, sometimes leading people to misattribute it to seasonal allergies or a cold.

4. Mild Headaches with Brain Fog
Patients are reporting headaches that come with a sense of mental fuzziness commonly known as "brain fog." Tasks that require focus, memory, or decision-making may suddenly feel more difficult.

5. Low-Grade Fever and Chills
Not all covid-19 fevers are high; many recent cases are showing temperatures between 99°F and 100.4°F. These may come with chills, which can be easily overlooked or dismissed.

6. Sore Throat with Hoarseness
This symptom has become more pronounced in 2025 cases. Throats feel scratchier, and hoarseness often lingers for days, even as other symptoms resolve.

7. Mild Gastrointestinal Distress
In addition to nausea, some individuals experience light abdominal discomfort or loose stools. These symptoms, while non-severe, have become more frequent in newer subvariants.

—Femina

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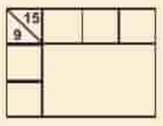
@BangaloreMirror

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

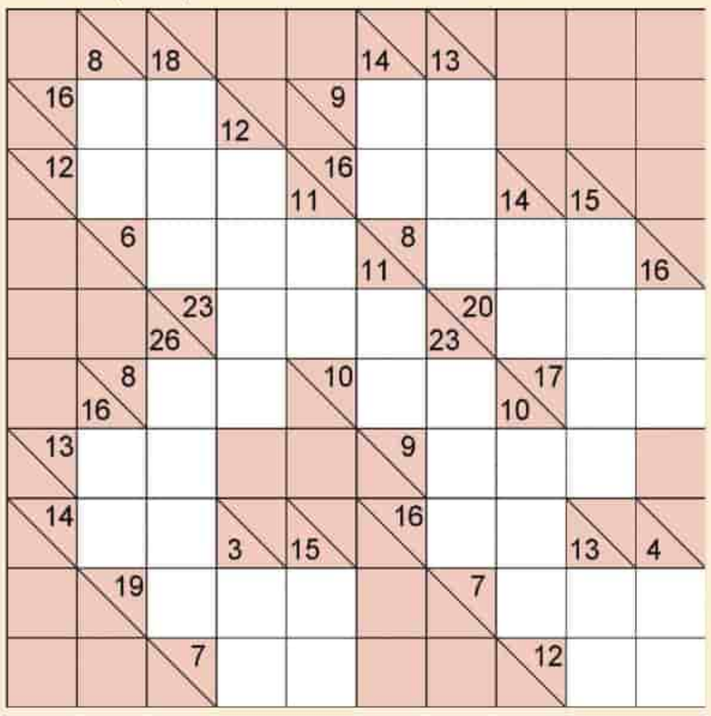
The average age of four people is 40.5. Each age is a prime number with 3 as the unit digit. The statistical range of the four ages is 70. What are the four ages?

Kakuro

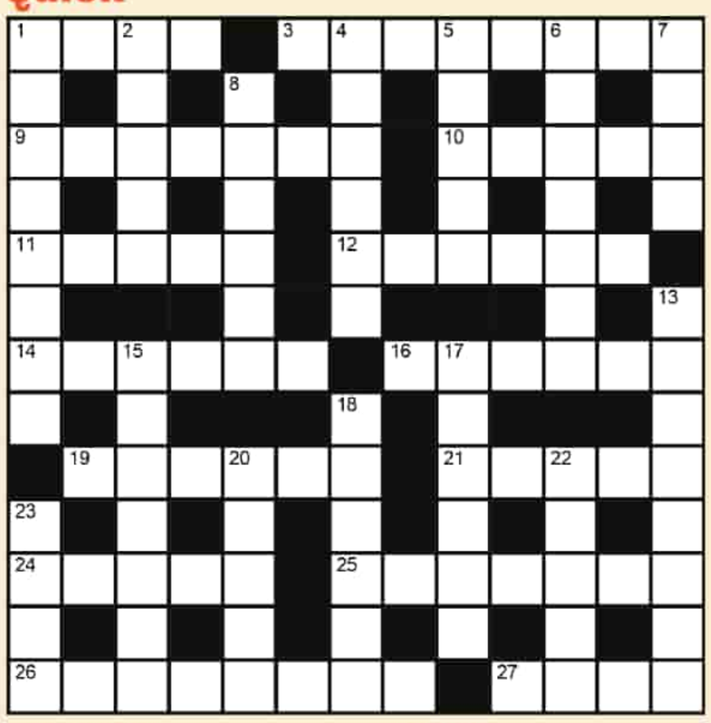
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 ____ and void ? (4)
3 Liking or attraction (8)
9 In name only (7)
10 Common fruit (5)
11 Hindu sun-god (5)
12 Newspaper boss (6)
14 Barrel-maker (6)
16 Way out, exit (6)
19 Black Sea port in Ukraine (6)
21 Our Ex-PM Morarjibhai ___ (5)
24 Tomb (5)
25 Young hare (7)
26 Wanted or popular? (2,6)
27 Looked at keenly (4)

DOWN

1 Person without equal (8)
2 Madagascan animal (5)
4 Boneless slice of fish (6)
5 That man from Baghdad (5)
6 Beg (7)
7 Belgian river (4)
8 Breathe in (6)
13 Helped out (8)
15 Veteran (3,4)
17 Karnataka lake home to a bird sanctuary (6)
18 __ __ with : agree with? (4,2)
20 Water vapour (5)
22 Morose; rude (5)
23 Hindu god of fire (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: M EQUALS Y

IJ DEZV IJ MEC PBTXFB XZZBT YBDK IZP QEGNETW NTEG IZMWYXZV, UBBK XW.

Linemaro

You are young and fun loving, that gives you 10 points. Then you are slim, that gives you five points. At 20 points you get my phone number

Mindchow

Happiness depends on a good conscience, good health, occupation and freedom in all pursuits

Joke of the day

In all recorded history, there has not been one economist who has had to worry where his next meal is coming from

Loop

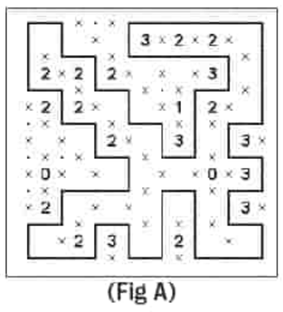
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

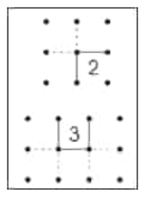
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

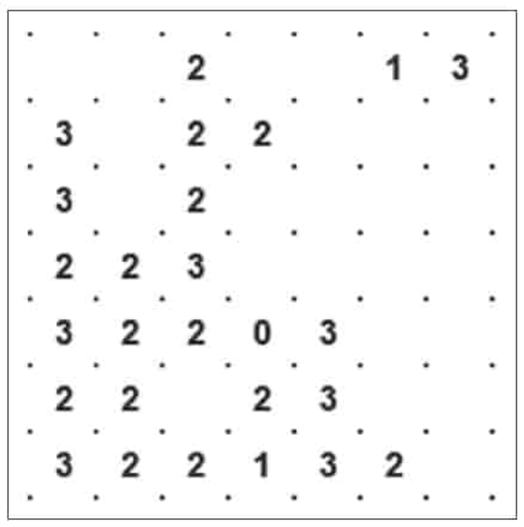
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., If you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



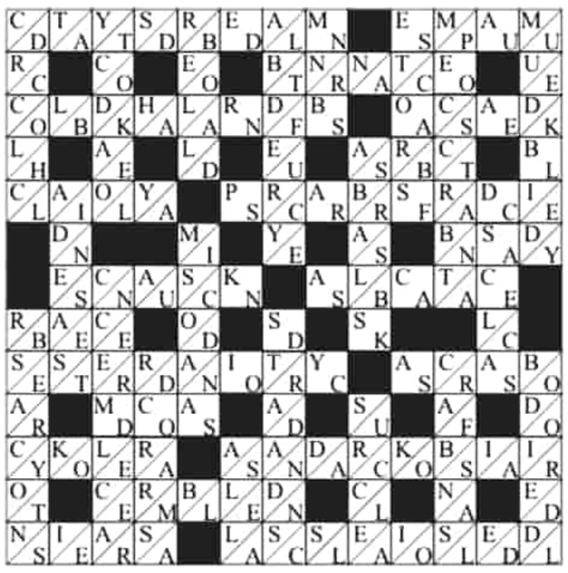
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



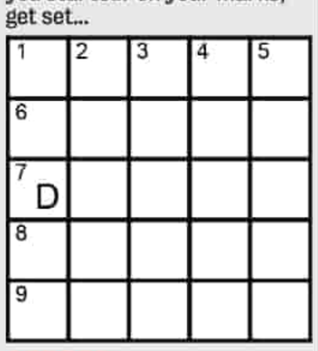
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

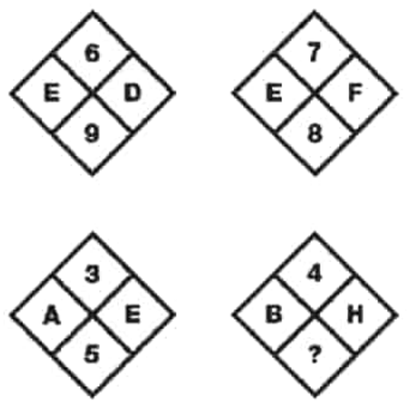
1 Arcas; 6 Chore; 7 Id Say; 8 A rale; 9 Fists

DOWN

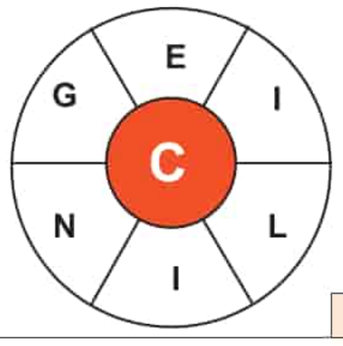
1 So sad; 2 I a car; 3 Fiche; 4 Aster; 5 Lyra's

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

03 Average; 04 Good; 05 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	7		2	4				
3					6	1		9
		6		3		8		
	6	5						
1			6		8			5
						6	3	
		1		5		7		
7		8	1					6
				6	9		8	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 3

3 3 4 7

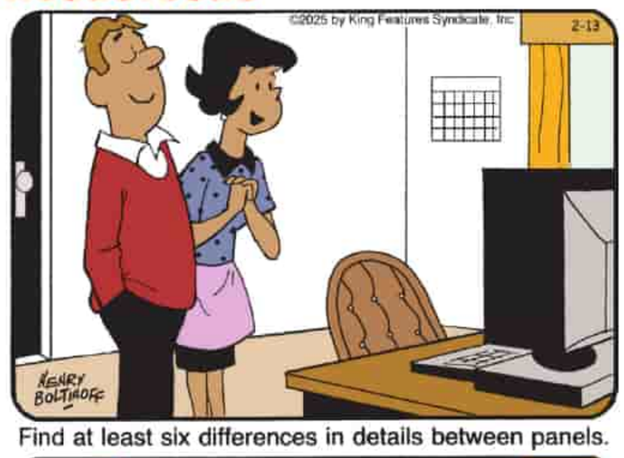
Medium = 8

9 9 6 4

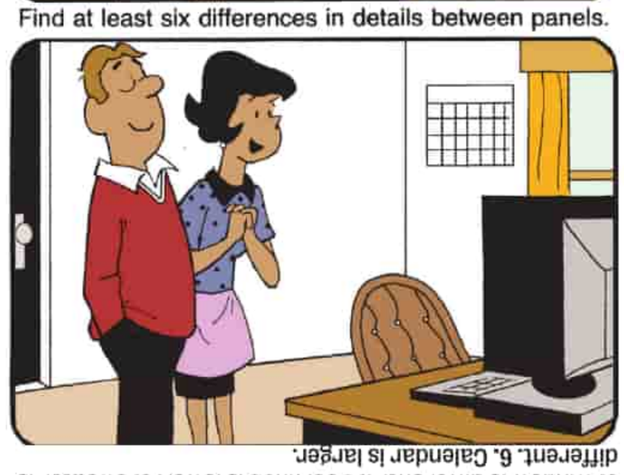
Hard = 13

3 5 8 3

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



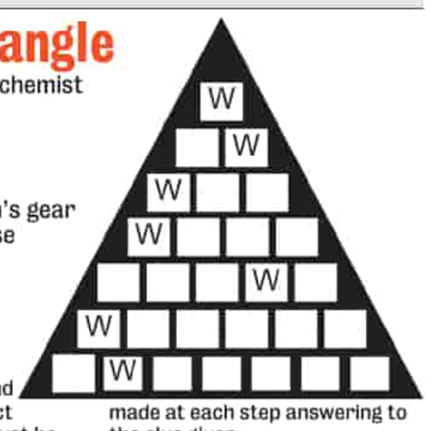
Differences: 1. Chair is moved. 2. Leg is moved. 3. Window is different. 4. Doorknob is lower. 5. Sweater is different. 6. Calendar is larger.

Riddler

Forward I'm heavy, but backwards I'm not. What am I?

Alpha triangle

1 Tungsten for the chemist
2 An interjection
3 State of conflict
4 Hospital division
5 Attracts
6 Shore-fisherman's gear
7 Traveled en masse



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

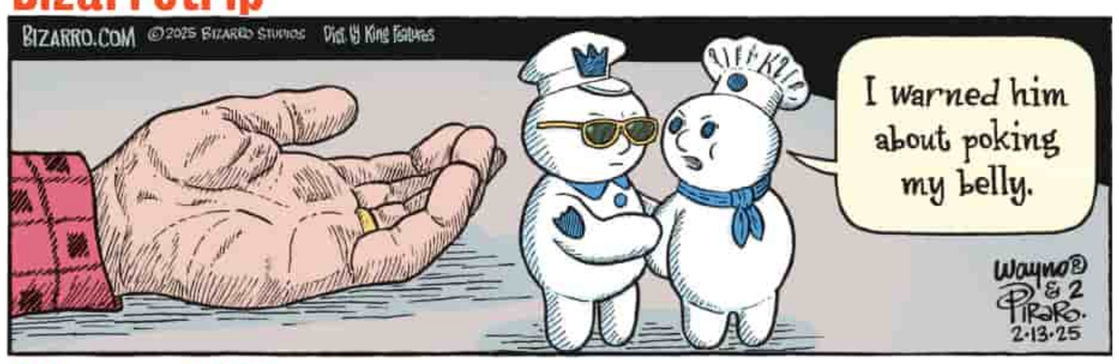
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye

YOU MADE ME INVISIBLE!
I KNOW, POPEYE! I'M QUITE PROUD!
I EVEN ASTOUNDED ME!
IT PROVES I'M A GENIUS!
NOW MAKE ME VISIBLE AGAIN!
GOOD HEAVENS!?! I CAN'T DO THAT! I DON'T KNOW HOW MY BRAIN MADE YOU INVISIBLE!
8-24
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

OOH, LUNCH-TIME.
GRUMBLE GRUMBLE
OH.
I FORGOT TO MAKE MY OWN LUNCH. I WAS SO BUSY GETTING MOM READY FOR SCHOOL!
I'LL HAVE TO FORAGE.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

SO AM I GOING TO MAKE IT TO THE BIG LEAGUES?
MADAM MARIE HYPNOTIST
I WAS INTO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE LONG BEFORE IT BECAME A THING.
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you are advised to be mindful of your words—being overly direct or careless in speech may upset those around you. Impulse spending on unnecessary items could affect your finances. Your mind may race with ideas, but it's important to slow down and approach decisions with patience and thoughtfulness.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
You may not feel your best today, as lingering health concerns could resurface and affect your mood. Acting in haste may lead to poor decisions. Avoid impulsive financial behavior, especially carrying loose cash, as it may be spent frivolously. Take time to rest and reflect before taking action.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
A peaceful mindset allows you to make sound financial and professional decisions. Investing capital into your business may improve liquidity and financial health. Romance flourishes—your bond with your spouse strengthens, and singles may find a suitable partner. Lovebirds may consider marriage. Students benefit from positive karmic support today.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
A joyful day awaits you as past losses begin to turn into gains. Recognition from your superiors may come your way, possibly leading to promotions or new responsibilities. Professional enemies may lose their grip. Relationship matters look promising, especially with support from friends and family for marriage discussions.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
You are blessed with positive energy and emotional satisfaction today. Difficulties from the past week may begin to resolve. Support from your team could help restart delayed projects. Financial gains in business may give a boost to your confidence and bank balance.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You may feel low and face minor health issues today. This is not an ideal time for new investments or launching ventures, as business losses are possible. Take a cautious approach and consider postponing financial decisions until circumstances stabilize.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Under the Moon's blessing, your decision-making sharpens, particularly on the professional front. New business opportunities may arise, enhancing your confidence. You might start innovative ventures with a partner, potentially leading to future growth and success.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Work life looks promising today. Recognition or a favorable transfer may be in store, and you could even consider switching jobs. Your relationship with superiors improves, and chronic health issues may ease, bringing happiness to your family.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today brings confidence and decisiveness. You may take important decisions quickly and effectively, opening up new opportunities. Expect joyful moments with friends and family. Love birds enjoy their time together, and job seekers may find employment through friends or referrals.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
You may experience a lack of enthusiasm and struggle to stay motivated. Arrogance could create friction in both your personal and professional life. Internally, you may feel less confident, which might hold back your creativity. It's a good day to practice humility and take things slowly.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Be cautious with your words today, especially when dealing with family or colleagues—blunt speech may harm relationships. Avoid spending on unnecessary items and take time to reflect before making significant decisions. A calm and measured approach will benefit you.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today brings clarity and quick decision-making. With support from colleagues, even tough choices can lead to success. Property-related issues among siblings may resolve. You may also go on short, purposeful trips. It's a good day for strengthening family ties and making progress at work.

KIDZONE

Anushika, Bengaluru

R Ananyaa, Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
3 13 23 43 53 73 83
Range 70: 3–73, 13–83
Try 3–73;
3+a+b+73=40.5*4
a+b=162–76; a+b=86
There are no 2 prime numbers in the exclusive range 3 to 73 that add to 86.
Try 13–83;
13+a+b+83=40.5*4
a+b=162–96; a+b=66
23+43=66
ANS: 13, 23, 43 & 83
Verify 83–13 = 70 range
(13+23+43+83)/4=40.5

BULL'S EYE
CEILING, ciling, icing, Ilce, nice

FAST FIVE

S	A	C	R	A
O	C	H	E	R
D	A	I	S	Y
A	R	E	A	L
S	I	F	T	S

RIDDLER Ton

STRIKE OUT

D	A	Y	D	R	E	A	M	■	S	P	A	M	■	■
O	L	D	H	A	N	D	S	■	A	C	E	D	■	■
R	■	O	■	B	R	A	C	E	■	E	■	■	■	■
L	E	■	D	■	U	■	A	R	C	■	L	■	■	■
L	I	L	Y	■	S	C	A	R	F	A	C	E	■	■
■	N	■	I	■	E	■	A	■	■	N	A	Y	■	■
S	I	R	S	■	A	S	S	A	I	L	E	D	■	■
T	■	E	M	B	E	D	■	L	■	A	■	E	■	■
C	O	L	A	■	S	N	A	C	K	B	A	R	■	■
A	■	D	O	S	■	A	■	U	■	A	■	O	■	■
E	T	E	R	N	I	T	Y	■	S	C	A	B	■	■
R	E	■	O	■	S	■	A	B	A	T	E	■	■	■
S	N	A	C	K	■	A	■	S	■	■	■	C	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

QUICK

I	N	D	E	M	A	N	D	■	E	Y	E	D	■	■
N	■	N	■	A	■	I	■	L	■	L	■	E	■	■
G	R	A	V	E	■	L	E	V	E	R	E	T	■	■
A	■	H	■	T	■	L	■	A	■	U	■	S	■	■
O	D	E	S	S	A	■	D	E	S	A	I	■	■	■
H	■	L	■	■	■	F	■	U	■	■	■	S	■	■
C	O	O	P	E	R	■	E	G	R	E	S	S	■	■
U	■	■	■	L	■	T	■	■	■	R	■	A	■	■
S	U	R	V	A	■	E	D	I	T	O	R	■	■	■
E	■	U	■	H	■	L	■	O	■	L	■	R	■	■
N	O	M	I	N	A	L	■	A	P	P	L	E	■	■
O	■	E	■	I	■	I	■	R	■	M	■	S	■	■
N	U	L	L	A	F	F	I	N	I	T	Y	■	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE
7. In each square, multiply the top and bottom numbers together to give a 2 digit result, and put the letters with the numerical values of each digit in the left and right hand spaces.

QUOTE UNCODE
As long as you derive inner help and comfort from anything, keep it.

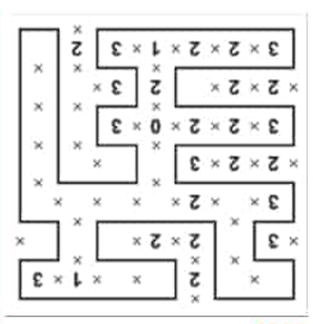
SUDOKU

8	7	9	2	4	1	5	6	3
5	1	6	9	3	7	8	2	4
3	2	4	5	8	6	1	7	9
4	6	5	3	7	2	9	1	8
1	3	7	6	9	8	2	4	5
9	8	2	4	1	5	6	3	7
6	4	1	8	5	3	7	9	2
7	9	8	1	2	4	3	5	6
2	5	3	7	6	9	4	8	1

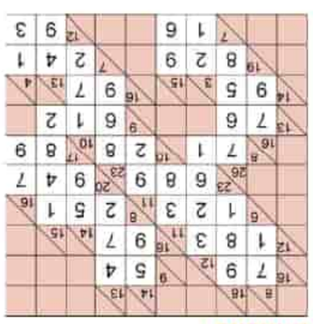
ALPHA TRIANGLE
W, AW, War, Ward, Draws, Waders, Swarmed.

GO FIGURE
Easy
3 – 3 + 7 – 4 = 3
Medium
9 – 4 – 6 + 9 = 8
Hard
8 – 3 + 3 + 5 = 13

LOOP



KAKURO



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 # Cillian, Daniel for Damien Chazelle film Director Damien Chazelle is in talks with actors Cillian Murphy and Daniel Craig for his untitled upcoming movie, reported Deadline. As per the outlet, Chazelle will direct and has written the script for the film

Feeling grateful

Sreeleela doesn't take title of next-big-thing lightly

Sreeleela is creating a buzz ahead of her Bollywood debut. In a recent interview, she opened up about the growing reputation of being the industry's 'next big thing.'

When asked about being called the 'next big thing,' Sreeleela expressed gratitude for the support and acknowledged the title as both motivation and responsibility. She emphasised her commitment to living up to expectations and giving her best in every opportunity, in an interview with Elle.

Sreeleela described her supporters as her "God-given family" and said she will never take their love for granted. She called her bond with the audience a beautiful love story, one too vast to be defined. At just 22, she has already starred in nearly a dozen films. She is set to make her Bollywood debut alongside Kartik Aaryan. When asked about the film, she described it as a "beautifully-packed present" for the audience, adding that "presents are best received as surprises."

Besides acting, Sreeleela is also a trained doctor. She shared that "doctor" was the first word she learned to spell, and it was always clear to her. However, many around her, especially her mother's colleagues, predicted she would pursue acting. **—ETimes**

Indian shringar

Actor Aditi Rao Hydari is currently at the Cannes Film Festival, and she has been making the most of her time in the French city with her fashion statement.

She was spotted donning both Western and Indian attire. However, her appearance in traditional outfit caught more eyeballs.

Sporting a red coloured saree with a matching sleeveless blouse, Aditi looked exquisite. Her sindoor and bindi elevated her ethnic look as she perfectly embraced the beauty of traditional Indian shringar on a global platform. She opted for minimal make-up and tied her hair in a neat bun. Her choker necklace set also amped up her entire attire.

A day ago, Aditi walked the red carpet in a shimmering ombre bodycon gown by Rahul Mishra, accessorised with jewels from Chopard.

Meanwhile, on the acting front, Aditi will soon be seen in a web series titled O Saathi Re, which also stars Arjun Rampal and Avinash Tiwary. Imtiaz Ali took on the role of creator, writer, and showrunner, as he recently announced the project. —ANI

Then and now

Sushmita Sen stepped into Bollywood at an early age of 21. Nearly three decades into her career, Sushmita candidly admits she wasn't a natural actor at the start—and that early Bollywood seemed more interested in "which hero" was headlining the film than in the heroine herself.

At a recent INWEC event, Sushmita looked back on her early days in the film industry with refreshing honesty. She admitted that her acting skills were far from polished when she began and often finds her early performances cringeworthy in hindsight. However, she acknowledged that winning Miss Universe opened unexpected doors—including the chance to step into acting. For her, it was a blessing to be paid while learning the craft, even if the journey demanded immense effort and growth over the years.

Despite her success, she revealed that she never quite got the kind of roles she truly desired as an actor.

Reflecting on the evolution of cinema, she pointed out the stark contrast between the '90s and today's OTTdriven content. Back then, she recalled, the focus was rarely on the depth of a female character. Instead, it was all about who the male lead was, how many songs the heroine had, the number of dramatic scenes, and which designer outfits she wore. That was the standard measure of a heroine's presence in a film during that era. **—ETimes**

Homebound wows Cannes

Ten years after 'Masaan', filmmaker Neeraj Ghaywan returned to the Cannes Film Festival with a heartwarming film, 'Homebound'.

On Wednesday, 'Homebound', which stars Ishaan Khatter, Janhvi Kapoor and Vishal Jethwa, was screened at the 78th edition of the prestigious festival. What made the premiere special was the almost 9-minute-long standing ovation given to the team by the audience.

Several visuals from the screening surfaced online in which filmmaker Neeraj Ghaywan could be seen getting emotional on receiving thunderous applause. Teary-eyed Neeraj also hugged producer Karan Johar.

Ishaan also got emotional as the crowd stood up and clapped nonstop in the theatre.

As per Variety, 'Homebound' revolves around two childhood friends from a small North Indian village who chase a police job that promises them the dignity they've long been denied. But as they inch closer to their dream, mounting desperation threatens the bond that holds them together.

Ghaywan described 'Homebound' as "a deeply personal story about friendship, dignity, and survival." "It's about people who are often unseen, and the quiet strength they carry in a world that rarely pauses for them," said the director, adding that he hopes the film "helps us look closer--with empathy--and see what we've been conditioned to ignore." Legendary filmmaker Martin Scorsese recently joined the film as executive producer. **ANI**